



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff **Scott Smith** Chief Deputy

Law of the Month

November 2016

Before you know it, we will have the first snow of the season. With the snow and slick roads, the Dodge County Sheriff's Office will respond to multiple crashes. Many of these crashes are minor where the drivers lose control and slide into a ditch. Others are more severe with substantial damage or injuries. Not only are the drivers dealing with tow truck bills, auto body repairs, insurance claims or injuries, they may receive a citation.

Driving too fast for conditions has a fine of \$213.10 along with 4 demerit points. Second violation within one year jumps to \$263.50 and another 4 points.

Wisconsin State Statute 346.57(3) states: Conditions requiring reduced speed. The operator of every vehicle shall, consistent with the requirements of sub. (2), drive at an appropriate reduced speed when approaching and crossing an intersection or railway grade crossing, when approaching and going around a curve, when approaching a hillcrest, when traveling upon any narrow or winding roadway, when passing school children, highway construction or maintenance workers, sanitation workers or other pedestrians and when a special hazard exists with regard to other traffic or by reason of weather or highway conditions.

In short, drivers are required to reduce their speed for many reasons which include weather or highway conditions.

Often drivers who are involved in a crash during bad weather say "I wasn't speeding". That may be true but one must remember the posted speed limit is designed for dry pavement. When the conditions listed in the statute are present, drivers must reduce their speed.

Deputies look at the entire situation involving the crash and use their discretion when issuing a citation.

Dodge County Sheriff's Office Captain Trace Frost says, "Drivers are reminded to always reduce their speed when weather conditions change. This can be related to snow, ice, fog, rain or any of the weather we experience in Dodge County. By reducing their speed, they can be assured of making it to their destination safely".